

La Llorona y Más: Latinx Legend Tripping

Online Summer 2020 (July 13-August 14)

MTWTHF 11:30am-1pm

WGS S340: 82925, MAS S374:81320, AMS S321:78460,

ES370W: 79855

Instructor: Dr. Rachel González-Martin

Associate Professor, Department of Mexican American and Latina/o Studies

Course Description:

Legend tripping is the process by which individuals and groups visit and/or recreate legendary contexts, with the hopes of facilitating an encounter with the strange. This course will focus on narrative folklore and practice from diverse traditions across the U.S. based Latinx diaspora. Legends, or folk narratives told as true share interpretations of the strange in everyday social life of tellers and audiences alike. Shared amongst peers and across generations, legends within Latinx communities have been used to influence the behaviors and beliefs of young women.

Through reading, collecting, and analyzing legend texts such as *La Llorona*, *Dancing with the Devil*, and personal stories of La Lechuza among other tales of supernatural encounters, we will interrogate key archetypes of powerful women such as brujas, curanderas, and hechiceras. Students will engage with these texts the instrumentalization of a community logic of supernatural belief that impact the development of gender and sexuality identities across US Latinx communities. We will draw on materials from the fields of Folklore, Anthropology, Latina/o Studies, History and American Studies.

This course will feature Latinx *legends* and *testimonio* narrative genres to discuss how supernatural tales impact community socialization. Focusing on female protagonists, narrators, and tellers, students will construct their own “legend” texts in reverse, recasting the female/femme victim/villain in a new light, for a new generation. Students will theorize the “best” form their narrative will take—literary, visual, auditory etc.—to best reach the audience of their choosing.

By the end of the course students will be able to:



1. Identify major recurring themes illustrated in folk narrative texts from U.S. Latino communities.
2. Evaluate folk narrative texts as community historiography.
3. Critically read/listen to story texts and identify how form of texts impacts how narratives circulate and socialize gendered norms.

This course carries 2-flags:

Cultural Diversity in the United States: Cultural Diversity courses are designed to increase your familiarity with the variety and richness of the American cultural experience. You should therefore expect a substantial portion of your grade to come from assignments covering the practices, beliefs, and histories of at least one U.S. cultural group that has experienced persistent marginalization.

Writing: Writing Flag courses are designed to give students experience with writing in an academic discipline. In this class, you can expect to write regularly during the semester, complete substantial writing projects, and receive feedback from your instructor to help you improve your writing. Students should therefore expect a substantial portion of his/her grade to come from your written work.

Required Reading:

Her Body and Other Parties (Carmen Maria Machado). All other readings will be accessible via Internet link, Podcasts, or Canvas posting.

Podcast information

The Night Owl Podcast: <https://www.thenightowlpodcast.com/>

LatinoUSA: <https://www.npr.org/programs/latino-usa/453210838/ghost-stories>

Monstras Podcast: <https://www.stitcher.com/podcast/podbean-113/monstras>

Lechuza Tales: reddit: https://www.reddit.com/r/sanantonio/comments/7qd40h/tell_me_you_la_lechuza_tales/

A Paranormal Chicks Podcast #31NOH-Lil Creepster Friendly Tales (The Green Ribbon”) <https://aparanormalchicks.com/>

Course Policies

Zoom Classroom Expectations:

You are not required to have your camera “on” during class, but seeing faces helps!

- 1) Be on time to class on time (logging in no later than 11:45am) and prepared to contribute to class discussion.
- 2) Complete all assigned readings before class.
- 3) Communicate (Email or Zoom) with instructor regarding absences, questions, problems, or concerns.
- 4) Cultivate a respectful classroom environment; keep your microphone on “mute” during class.
- 5) Familiarize yourself with using Zoom (microphone management, camera use, hand-raising function)

Attendance: Attendance is required for 3 classes per week for **synchronous instruction, Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday**. Attendance is worth 10% of your course grade. **Monday and Friday course work will be done asynchronously—except for the FINAL Friday class (August 14th) where we will have our final lecture.**

Participation: Participation is worth 20% of your course grade. This will be calculated through 1) completion of modules, 2) “break-out” small group participation, 3) general in-session questions/comments, 4) Project workshops, and 5) office hours.

Accommodations: If you need help managing this online course, please speak to me one on one in office hours and we can discuss your needs, if you have official paperwork or not.

The University of Texas at Austin provides upon request appropriate academic accommodations for qualified students with disabilities. For more information, go to:<http://ddce.utexas.edu/disability/accommodations-and-services/>.

Academic Integrity: All students are responsible for reviewing and understanding the University’s guidelines on academic dishonesty. Students who violate University rules on scholastic dishonesty are subject to disciplinary penalties, including the possibility of failure in the course and/ or dismissal from the University. For further information about what constitutes academic dishonesty on the UT campus visit:

<https://deanofstudents.utexas.edu/conduct/academicintegrity.php>

Student Safety: Starting January 1, 2020 **all employees** who witness or receive information about sexual harassment, sexual assault, dating violence and stalking that involve a current student or employee must promptly report the incident to the University’s Title IX Coordinator or a Deputy Title IX Coordinator. **I AM A MANDATORY REPORTER.**

FAQ about Title IX and the new SB 212 see:

https://titleix.utexas.edu/faqs?utm_source=newsletter&utm_medium=email&utm_content=FAQ&utm_campaign=sb212-december-update

Assignments:

Writing Assignments: Each Monday students have a writing assignment due on Canvas by 1:30pm. **See handout for details.**

Modules: Fridays students will complete online canvas modules to help deepen understandings of weekly themes.

Group Discussions: Thursdays we will discuss themes, and students will be put into “Break-Out” rooms in Zoom where they will discuss their responses to a set of questions about the “Pre” reading/listening texts.

Project Workshops: Students will be asked to prepare notes about ideas to share about their possible topics and methods. These will be informal notes, but I will ask that they be submitted through canvas by the end of class on Wednesdays.

Class Project:

Students will choose supernatural legend text circulated in Latinx communities (from class, or one they know from their own experience) as inspiration. Each student will create a Women-of -Color- Feminist “retelling” of the text from their own perspective, but will modify the details to create a *different* message about social expectations of gender—one that affirms women in positions of social power and leadership. This creative piece of writing will be contextualized by an introduction and conclusion intellectualizes the changes to the story that each author makes, as well as a discussion of the impact on the intended audience. MLA formal writing guidelines apply to the contextualizing information. The creative story piece can take myriad forms: written, oral/audio, podcast, visual, digital video, material (submitted in photographs). See handout for complete details.

Course Evaluation:

Grades will be determined by completion and quality of all assignments, and one final project as determined by the professor. The writing assignments will be graded by our course TA, and any concerns should be discussed with them **before** they go on to the professor. Late work will be assessed on a case-by-case basis.

Attendance: 10%
Participation: 20%

Project Workshop
Final Project 30%

Assignments (submitted items) 40%:
 Writing Assignments
 Group Discussions
 Module

A 94-100
B 84-89
C 74-79
D 64-69

July 12-17 th Haunted Women	Introductions and Course Overview	What is Latinx Legend Tripping?	Project Introduction LatinoUSA: “Growing Up Latino and Scared” https://www.npr.org/programs/latino-usa/453210838/ghost-stories “Fire, Vengeance, and Grandma”	Pre: <i>Night Owl Podcast</i> Ep: 24-25, “Origins Part 1 and 2” LatinoUSA: “Santería Wars”	Legend Tripping and (Re)Telling “Our” Stories
July 20-24 The Green Ribbon/ The Husband Stitch	Writing Assignment#1 “The Husband Stitch” (Machado)	Memoir/Life-Writing “Inventory”(Machado) LatinoUSA: “Beware the Witch Owl” “Josephina Lopez is Not Afraid of Spirits”	Workshop #1 Topic (“The Strange”) (Class Observation)	Pre: <i>A Paranormal Chicks Podcast</i> #31NOH-Lil Creepster Friendly Tales (The Green Ribbon) (Oct. 25, 2019) https://www.buzzfeed.com/lyapalater/for-everyone-thats-still-fucked-up-over-that-stor	MODULE #1 Testimonio/Community Stories
July 27 th -31 st Female Apparitions	Writing Assignment #2 “Real Women Have Bodies” (Machado) “Eight Bites” (Machado)	Ghost Citizens Version Text(s): The Lady in Lace b. Lady in the Veil c. La Mala Hora LatinoUSA: “Sandra Cisneros Dreams of Ghosts”	Workshop #2 Forms and Methods	Pre: <i>Night Owl Podcast</i> Campfire 2: The Monsters Might be Real (Feb 11, 2019)	MODULE #2 Memorates/Believability
August 3-7 th La Llorona(s)	Writing Assignment #3 Version Text(s): a. La Llorona b. The Wailing Woman	Gender and Colonialism “Chicana Feminism and Horror...” (Morales) LatinoUSA: “La Llorona as Feminist Icon”	Workshop #3 Issues/Tensions	Pre: <i>Monstras</i> Podcast, Ep: 1, “La Llorona”	MODULE#3 “History”/Historiography
August 10 th -14 th -- Monstrous Women	Writing Assignment #4 “Monstrous Femininity” (Calafell)	Pathological Femininity Version Text(s): Dancing with the Devil b. Lechuza Tales	Workshop #4 Check in/ Sharing	Pre: <i>Monstras</i> Podcast, Ep: 17-18, “Mataviejitas I & II”	<i>Haunted Women</i> : Traditional Narratives & Internalized Misogyny FINAL PROJECT DUE SAT. 5pm on Canvas.
	<i>Monday: Writing Day</i>	Tuesday: Lecture	Wednesday: Project Workshop	Thursday: Group Break-Out Discussion(s)	Friday: Media + Office Hours